

Emergency appeal



International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

Myanmar: Cyclone Nargis

Emergency appeal n°MDRMM002
GLIDE n° [TC-2008-000057-MMR](#)
6 May 2008

This Preliminary Emergency Appeal seeks CHF 6,290,909 (USD 5.9 million or EUR 3.86 million) in cash, kind, or services in response to a request for support from Myanmar Red Cross Society to assist 30,000 families for 6 months.

Tropical cyclone Nargis has devastated large parts of the mid-south of Myanmar. Casualty figures continue to rise. At the launch of this appeal, latest reports indicate 22,000 people killed, 41,000 people missing and millions affected. It is a huge disaster by any measure.

CHF 200,000 (USD 190,000 or EUR 123,000) from the International Federation's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) enabled Myanmar Red Cross Society to conduct immediate assessments of some of the affected areas and distribute some relief items. However, the scale of the needs is clearly massive.

This is a situation that the country has not dealt with before, in terms of the scale of the disaster and level of international interest and offers of support.

It is also important to note that the national society, despite the tremendous commitment of its volunteers in supporting vulnerable communities over the years, has not had the experience of dealing with a catastrophe of this magnitude. In light of this, partners are requested to be sensitive to the probable significant constraints during this operation.

This preliminary emergency appeal is focused on relief only. It is probable that as a more detailed and comprehensive picture emerges of needs and the response that is logistically possible, a revision to this preliminary appeal will be issued.

The initial plan of action in this appeal is based on relief and emergency shelter.

[<click here to view the attached Emergency Appeal Budget>](#)

[<here to link to a map of the affected area>](#)

[<here to view contact details>](#)

The situation

Communities across the mid-south of Myanmar are reeling after a massive storm – tropical cyclone Nargis – devastated vast populated areas. The scale of destruction and loss is massive: casualty figures are still rising with reported numbers at the time of this appeal launch: 22,000 dead, 41,000 missing and millions affected.

The category four cyclone struck west-southwest of Yangon city, Friday 2 May 2008. Winds exceeded 190 kph and the storm ripped through the delta city (estimated population 6 million) for more than ten hours until Saturday noon on 3 May. Homes were flattened, more sturdy structures damaged, trees uprooted and power lines downed.

State officials, along with Myanmar Red Cross Society, were first on the scene to help some of the shattered communities in terms of basics, such as water and temporary shelter. Debris blocked many roads and telecommunications were badly hit. While the disaster is clearly massive, its true extent and detail are still emerging in a fragmented snapshot of assessments, reports and anecdotes. This is one of the significant challenges of the operation in this early phase.

A state of emergency has been declared in five regions: the city of Yangon, Ayeyarwady, Pegu and the states of Karen and Mon. There are major concerns over access to safe drinking water, purification tablets, shelter, cooking sets, basic health materials, diesel, mosquito nets, and adequate food supplies.

Reports indicate significant devastation in villages along the south coast of the delta region. The seriously affected areas in the Ayeyarwady division include: Maubin, Nga Pu Baw, Haing Gyi and Labutta. In the Yangon division, affected areas include Dahyan, Kawmu, Yankin, Shwedidah, Hlai Ngtya and Daw Bin.

The government has established an emergency committee headed by the prime minister. At present, the five central and southern regions of Yangon, Ayeyarwady, Bago, Mon and Karen states have been declared disaster areas. Military and police units have been deployed for rescue, rehabilitation and clean-up operations in Yangon.

Prices for basic commodities are increasing exponentially. People are now stocking up and buying large quantities of the food stocks from supermarkets etc; there are reports of some items of food running out. The availability of fuel for transport is a major concern.

Situation reports from some townships and villages in the delta indicate the extent of the devastation. For instance, 90 per cent of structures in Laputta are seriously damaged. In other townships huge numbers of people are missing; in one town alone the number is reportedly 2,800. Wounded people have been brought into the Pathein hospital, arriving mostly by boat.

Coordination and partnerships

The Myanmar Red Cross Society, with Federation support, has been active in in-country coordination mechanisms. On 5 May, the Red Cross took part in the Inter Agency Standing Committee (IASC) where the activation of the cluster system was discussed. Because of a lack of in-country Red Cross resources to play an effective lead role as convenor of the shelter cluster, the Federation is in conversation with UNHCR to see if they would take over this responsibility. The Red Cross also met with embassies and institutional donors in Yangon to discuss needs and the operation ahead, and attended a government-convened meeting that outlined the response thus far from the Myanmar authorities.

At a regional level, the International Federation continues to link in with the UN system and NGOs, as part of the IASC network, to ensure a coordinated response. These daily meetings are the scene

of proactive discussion and information exchange that is clearly demonstrating a collective will to work together in support of the people of Myanmar. OCHA is consolidating information and assessments from various sources and the International Federation is committed to this process.

In Yangon, the small but experienced Federation team (head of office plus two delegates, health and organizational development) as well as representatives from Danish and French Red Cross and the ICRC, are working through partners and relations already established to ensure that the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement plays as effective role as possible. The Federation's South East Asia regional disaster management coordinator arrived in Yangon 6 May to support efforts.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

The Myanmar Red Cross Society (MRCS), together with the International Federation, has been carrying out assessments since Saturday 3 May. Assessments are due to continue tomorrow (Wednesday 7 May). Two teams were deployed in Yangon initially and subsequently on Monday 5 May, three went to areas perceived to be most affected: ie the Ayeyarwady and Bago divisions and Karen and Mon states. These teams distributed water purification tablets among other relief. The teams were made up of specialists in disaster management, health, communications and first aid. A Federation health delegate supported the assessment teams in Yangon Division. MRCS is sending some limited relief supplies following the assessments. The national society does not have nearly enough in stock to cater for the needs. The UN, including UNICEF, has signalled its desire to work with and through MRCS.

A DREF allocation of CHF 200,000 was released by the International Federation to support the national society in this and in the distribution of household items (i.e. cooking utensils and hygiene items) and emergency shelters. The Federation continues to support MRCS in its work with local authorities, local organizations as well as the massive interest from the international community.

Over 100 Red Cross volunteers have joined the fire brigade and a medical team to travel to one of the worst affected areas in the delta. Local people are telling the volunteers that water, oral rehydration salts, bandages, tinned and dried food are their priorities.

The MRCS warehouse in Yangon has been damaged, but its supplies are still usable. Prepositioned stocks were also available from the national society's warehouses in Bago division and Mon state. Stocks of family kits in the MRCS warehouse in Patheingyi have been moved to the delta. There are currently plans to replenish stocks through the Asia Pacific Regional Logistics Unit in Kuala Lumpur.

The first significant move to inject momentum into the international support aspect of the operation has been efforts to send a plane from Kuala Lumpur with 300 shelter kits into Yangon airport. Negotiations are still underway but it is hoped that this plane will arrive 7 May. While a relatively modest start this initiative is seen as a 'test run' for procedures and activating a more active logistics pipeline in the coming days. The 300 shelter kits will be distributed as soon as they arrive, and a follow up order will be immediately after they arrived in country. In Kuala Lumpur, there are a total of 20,000 family and shelter kits that are ready to move when logistically possible.

As MRCS is a community based organisation, staff – as well as colleagues from the Federation – have been affected. Many of their homes have been damaged; they have no access to running water. Nobody in Yangon has electricity unless they have a functioning generator.

Negotiations are underway to charter a special ferry for staff to come to work as the cost of public transport has soared.

Relief distributions

MRCS has distributed approximately 2,000 family kits around Yangon. These kits include: shirts and trousers for men and boys, blouses and skirts for women and girls, *longgyi* for both men and women, blankets, mosquito nets, towels, plastic sheeting, soap for personal use and washing, two aluminium cooking pots, mugs, plates and spoons. The national society has moved to access another 2,200 family kits pre-positioned in branches across the country.

Five thousand litres of drinking water have been distributed to schools and pagodas, which are housing displaced people.

As stated, the Federation's regional logistics unit in Kuala Lumpur has pre-positioned stocks in store including shelter kits, tarpaulins, blankets, mosquito nets, jerry cans and kitchen sets on stand-by to send to Myanmar by air or sea.

The needs

As stated, the principal focus of this plan of action is basic relief items, including cooking utensils, mosquito nets, and temporary shelter. Other severe needs on the ground include drinking water and fuel supplies (reportedly in short supply and with prices rising), basic health items and food.

Initial assessments are providing a first snapshot of needs. The Myanmar Red Cross Society experience in cyclone response (ie in the wake of cyclone Mala in 2006 and cyclone Rakhine in 2004) has also helped inform this first wave of information of needs on the ground. But as stated, this is a disaster of unprecedented scale with several logistical challenges, both in country and internationally. Assessment is an ongoing process, both for the Red Cross as well as the authorities and other humanitarian agencies. In country, MRCS with Federation support, is feeding into the building of an overall picture of needs and how each organization can play the most effective role possible as part of the authorities' coordinated response.

This emergency appeal plan of action may well be revised in the coming days as a more complete picture of needs, capacity and gaps emerges. The Federation, on behalf of Myanmar RCS, will communicate to its partners regularly as the operation evolves via standard Operations Updates that will be posted on the Federation's website: www.ifrc.org.

The proposed operation

Relief distributions are the focal point of the operation at this stage. MRCS President and the International Federation met with the Ministry of Social Welfare Relief and Resettlement on 6 May; the minister confirmed that he wants as many relief items as possible and is prepared to accept charter flights of goods.

Current priorities are drinking water and shelter kits, such as tarpaulins, plastic sheeting, bed nets as well as food. Family and shelter kits have already been requested. Water is a major concern as houses rely on electricity to pump it into the pipes.

A key issue is the capacity of MRCS to distribute the goods effectively under such extreme circumstances and such pressure.

The Federation has three rubhalls and is planning to set up one close to the airport and two in the delta. WFP also has additional warehousing space in their rubhalls which has been offered to MRCS and other organisations.

After agreeing to the launch of an emergency appeal, MRCS informed both the Minister of Health and the Minister of Social Welfare Relief and Resettlement.

A communications station at the Federation office has been established, staffed by an MRCS team. French Red Cross is assisting in this. As information comes in from each state and divisions a profile of the disaster is being compiled. This developing picture will be communicated in daily briefings. In terms of delegate support staff, logistics and shelter coordination are the priority. The Federation is looking into ports and airport procedures. There have been indications that import duty would not be charged on Red Cross supplies. This is being followed up.

International agencies are coordinating to see 'who has what where'; cluster leads are working with the information available.

Discussions will be held with MRCS and ICRC about a tracing unit to work on the area of family reunification that is certain to be a major need.

Operation objective: To support Myanmar Red Cross efforts to provide immediate relief to 30,000 families in terms of shelter, cooking utensils and basic household items.

Main activities

Relief distributions (non-food items)

- Ongoing community assessments.
- Logging of needs and beneficiary registration.
- Mobilization of relief supplies from pre-positioned stocks and other sources, including international assistance.
- Additional local / regional procurement, transport, and emergency storage.
- Distribution of relief items, with follow-up monitoring and coordination (distribution of 30,000 hygiene parcels, 30,000 jerry cans, 30,000 cooking sets, and 30,000 mosquito nets).
- Follow-up monitoring and coordination.

Emergency shelter

- Ongoing community assessments.
- Logging of needs and beneficiary registration.
- Mobilization of relief supplies from pre-positioned stocks and other sources, including international assistance.
- Additional local / regional procurement, transport, and emergency storage.
- Distribution of 30,000 shelter kits
- Follow-up monitoring and coordination.

Communications – Advocacy and Public information

The MRCS is a well established and prominent humanitarian organisation. Its small but active and enterprising communications department will continue to take the lead in country to promote not just the work of the Red Cross but to raise awareness of issues that affected communities are best kept abreast of as the nature of their vulnerability changes as the days and weeks pass after the cyclone. However, the unit is small and will have to focus its capacity on major issues only. From a regional and international perspective, the Federation will continue to represent the work and interests of MRCS in its ongoing efforts of support to those affected. This will be done primarily from a communications specialist in Kuala Lumpur, backed by an able media team at the Geneva secretariat.

Capacity of the National Society

Disaster management: MRCS has long experience in emergency response and more recently has moved towards a more holistic approach to disaster management including strengthened preparedness and support to community risk reduction. Some of the value of that shift has been seen in the response to Cyclone Nargis with pre-positioned shelter kits (comprising tarpaulins and tools) and family kits (comprising clothing, cooking utensils) being distributed from warehouses.

The MRCS has a nationwide network of 324 branches and an on-the-ground presence in most of the affected areas. Its national roster includes 17,800 first aid staff, 46 people trained in psychosocial support (PSP), 95 people with water safety skills such as lifesaving, and 1,230 disaster action response team (DART) members trained in assessment and relief activities.

MRCS has over 70 years experience in humanitarian activities and is one of the country's leading humanitarian organizations. This was shown during its response to previous cyclones, albeit much smaller undertakings than this operation. The national society focuses its work via three core strategies, to: promote health; prevent diseases; and render services to those who are in distress. Its overall humanitarian objective is 'to alleviate human suffering'.

The National Society is an auxiliary to the Government in the field of health, disaster relief and social welfare in line with the MRCS disaster management policy.

Specifically during any disaster operation MRCS calls on its staff and volunteers to assist in the provision of relief, health and recovery activities for the affected population. In doing so, the disaster management (DM) division at national headquarters coordinates operations under the direction of the Executive Committee. The DM division works closely with other national headquarter departments, as well as branches in the states and divisions, and external partners.

At the Branch level, MRCS staff and volunteers, under the direction of the state and division Red Cross supervisory committee, work in cooperation with the local authorities, local NGOs and community members in disaster response.

To meet the challenge of effective disaster response, MRCS acknowledges the value of preparedness. It has developed a capacity building programme to strengthen skills and resources of its staff and volunteers at National, State and Division, and Township levels. This enables it to respond to the needs of the affected populations at all times. Disaster assessment and response teams (DART) have been established at NHQ and in all 17 states and divisions, including the five affected by Cyclone Nargis. The establishment of DART at the township level will further strengthen the capacity of MRCS disaster response for the future.

In addition to the development of skilled human resources across the country MRCS is also cognizant of the need to pre-position relief (food and non-food) items for prompt dispatch in times of disaster and has warehouses in all 17 States and Divisions supported by centralised logistics systems.

Health: MRCS supported 1.76 million beneficiaries in 2007, indicating that the national society has existing programmes/capacity to manage and implement community based health activities on a significant scale. According to 2007 figures, MRCS reports 24,000 health volunteers but many of these would be solely community based first aid (CBFA)-trained.

In terms of community based water and sanitation, MRCS has some experience through existing programmes but capacity is limited.

Key health issues to consider during the operation are:

- Basic water and sanitation programming, including hygiene promotion and environmental health, remains a priority. This includes the restoration of watsan facilities to health facilities and schools.
- Prevention of diarrhoea diseases particularly among children; basic preventive messages, access to safe water and sanitation, and access to re-hydration in the case of dehydration due to diarrhoea is vital.
- Lower respiratory infections kill many children and these are high risk in crowded situations. Basic hygiene and 'danger symptoms' in children need to be highlighted in messages.
- Continuation of services in support of people who are receiving HIV or TB treatment; MRCS health volunteers can play a key role in 'getting to people' at community level because the volunteers are from the communities and know their people. The volunteers also know who are the most vulnerable, who have a disabled child, who is pregnant etc. Volunteers can also help transport/refer people to relevant health facility.
- Pregnant women needing an ante-natal check up – potentially high risk pregnancies may not be spotted.
- Secure access to safe blood i.e. MRCS continue to support donor recruitment.
- Access to basic drugs needs to be quickly assessed via knowing the extent of damage to health facilities. This is not a regular activity of MRCS but will be considered if a gap is identified.
- Provision of basic first aid, including materials needed to re-fill kits.
- Psychosocial support (PSP) at the community level as the most painful losses experienced are those of people rather than property or possessions. A major lesson from the tsunami operation was not to forget about this aspect of support. MRCS has had a training of trainers (ToT) in PSP and there is a core group of an estimated 46 trained people who potentially can be mobilized.

Overall, the health component of this operation should consider opportunities for longer-term sustainable health & water and sanitation support to MRCS.

Organizational development: In disaster operations of this magnitude where a sharp increase of operations is followed by a quick scale down, and where temporary but significant amounts of resources and actors are involved, it is common for the host National Society's capacity to suffer in the long term. Learning the lessons from recent disaster operations, organisational development (OD) expertise will be on hand to ensure that the Myanmar Red Cross Society becomes stronger, as well as ensuring that an effective relief and recovery operation takes place. This will be done by including OD perspectives from the beginning of the operation.

Joint work with the MRCS will be carried out to develop plans and organisation for the recovery. A strategy will be developed which will establish which roles the MRCS will carry out with support from international partners. These are the roles the MRCS will be able to sustain after the operation is over. The strategy will also clarify how necessary relief functions will be carried out under the auspices of the MRCS but which are implemented by international and local partners. This will support an effective, comprehensive operation as well the sustainable development of the National Society. The Federation already has in place an OD delegate in Yangon with established relations with MRCS as well as a regional OD team (including finance development) in Bangkok who have strong links with the national society through the country delegation.

Capacity of the Federation

The International Federation has a well-established, if relatively small, team in-country, based in the major city of Yangon. The country head of delegation is supported by a health delegate, an organizational development delegate as well as an able local team. The Federation's South East Asia regional disaster management coordinator arrived in Yangon on 6 May to strengthen in-

country support to MRCS. Further deployments are planned if permission is granted to expand International Federation support in Myanmar.

Also in Yangon, are small French Red Cross and Danish Red Cross representations. The SE Asia regional office, based in Bangkok, is the first line of outside support, under a head of office with a team including specialists in disaster management, health, human resources, planning and communications. Secretariat colleagues in the Asia Pacific Zone Office in Kuala Lumpur (ie logistics & resource mobilization) and Geneva (ie operations coordination team) are also coordinating support and the Operations Coordinator in Geneva is the focal point for contact with partner national societies.

Sister national societies within SE Asia (including Malaysian Red Crescent and Thai Red Cross) as well as partner national societies present in the region (including American and German Red Cross, in addition to Danish and French Red Cross already mentioned) are indicating various aspects of support. Several members across the wider Federation network have also been proactive in seeking information and avenues of appropriate support to MRCS and its work with affected communities.

Logistics:

It is hoped to provide additional support to the logistics function. The primary tasks of the additional logistics capacity on the ground in Myanmar will be:

- To carry out reception of air, sea and road freight of relief goods and arrange transportation to distribution points.
- Liaise and coordinate actions with other key actors to ensure that the logistics operation uses all information to be as efficient and effective as possible.

The current situation appears to be that access by sea is currently severely restricted if not completely blocked to the main container port in Yangon. The Kuala Lumpur Regional Logistics Unit is currently working on the first charter flight, an AN26, which if the necessary permissions can be finalized will be dispatched from Kuala Lumpur to Yangon International Airport on 7 May. At least one logistics delegate will be deployed to Myanmar within the next 48 hours.

A detailed and up-to-date mobilization table will soon be available on the Federation's Disaster Management Information System (DMIS). The Federation will be working on mobilizing specific relief items to respond to needs in the field and donors must coordinate with the Kuala Lumpur Regional Logistics Unit regarding outstanding needs. Shipping instructions and mobilization guidelines will be provided to donors from Kuala Lumpur RLU, with a Consignment Tracking Number issued prior to shipping any goods to the operation. Procurement of goods and transport can be arranged through the RLU.

Budget summary

See attached budget (Annex 1) for details.

Thomas Gurtner
Director
Coordination and Programmes Division

Markku Niskala
Secretary General

How we work

All International Federation assistance seeks to adhere to the [Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Non-Governmental Organizations \(NGOs\) in Disaster Relief](#) and is committed to the [Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response \(Sphere\)](#) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.

The International Federation's activities are aligned with its Global Agenda, which sets out four broad goals to meet the Federation's mission to 'improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity'.

Global Agenda Goals:

- Reduce the numbers of deaths, injuries and impact from disasters.
- Reduce the number of deaths, illnesses and impact from diseases and public health emergencies.
- Increase local community, civil society and Red Cross Red Crescent capacity to address the most urgent situations of vulnerability.
- Reduce intolerance, discrimination and social exclusion and promote respect for diversity and human dignity.

Contact information

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[<Emergency Appeal budget and map below; click here to return to the title page>](#)

PRELIMINARY APPEAL BUDGET SUMMARY

Myanmar:Tropical Cyclone

MDRMM002

ORIGINAL

RELIEF NEEDS

Shelter	1,800,000
Clothing & Textiles	150,000
Utensils & Tools	1,200,000
Other Supplies & Services	1,200,000
Total Relief Needs	4,350,000

CAPITAL EQUIPMENT

Vehicles Purchase	280,000
Computers & Telecom Equipment	10,000

TRANSPORT, STORAGE & VEHICLES

Storage - Warehouse	50,000
Distribution & Monitoring	100,000
Transport & Vehicles Costs	500,000

PERSONNEL

International Staff	372,000
Regionally Deployed Staff	30,000
National Staff	50,000
National Society Staff	50,000

GENERAL EXPENSES

Travel	30,000
Office /Admin	30,000
Communication Costs	30,000

PROGRAMME SUPPORT

Programme Support - PSR (6.5% of total)	408,909
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Total Operational Needs	1,940,909
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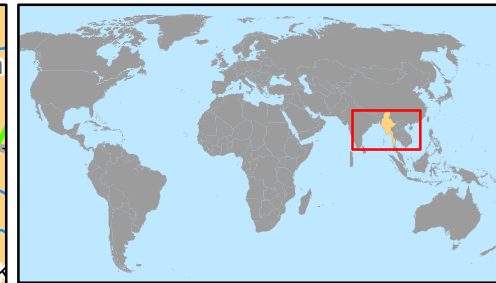
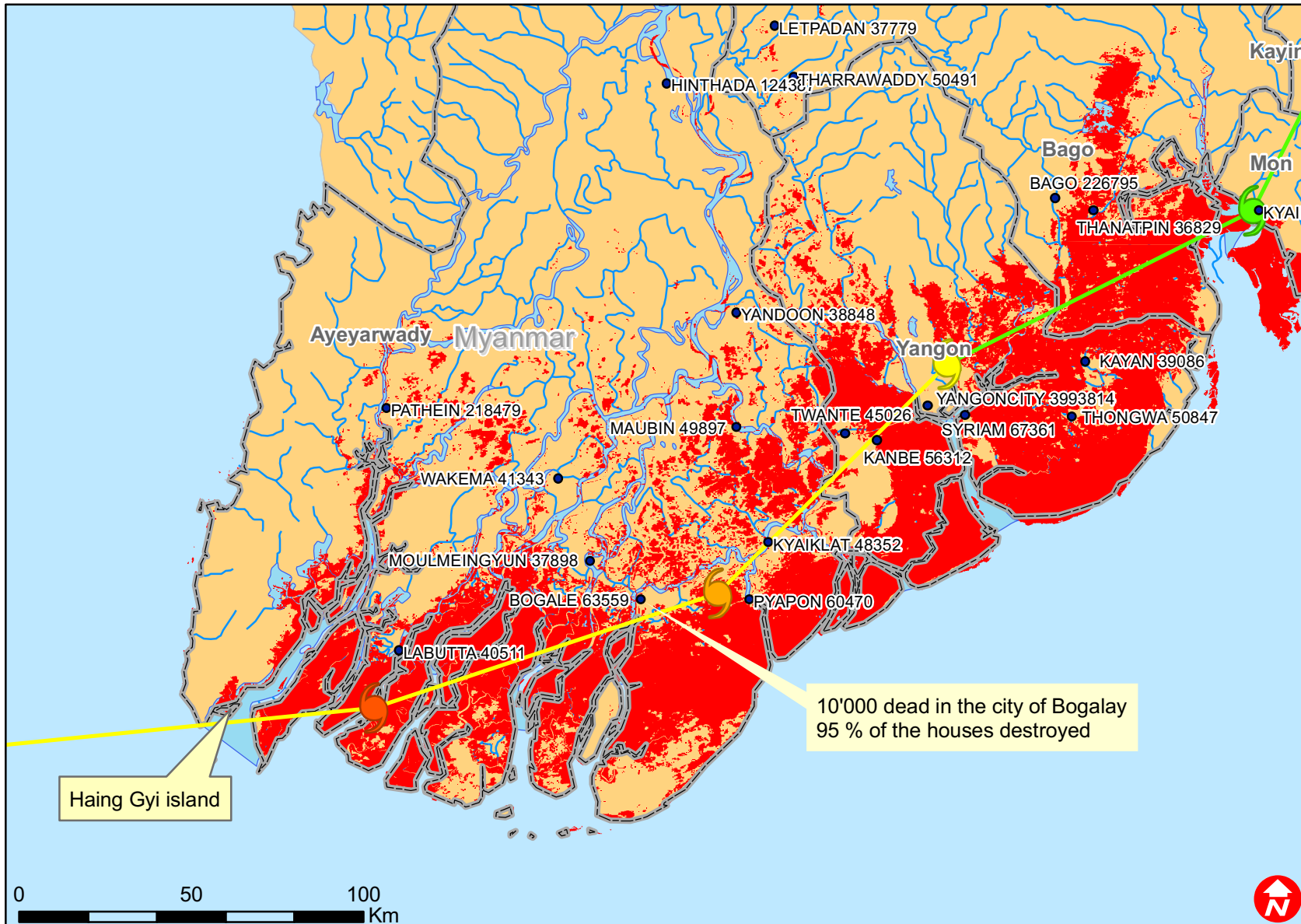
Total Appeal Budget (Cash & Kind)	6,290,909
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Less Available Resources

Net Request	6,290,909
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Myanmar: Tropical cyclone



- Main cities with population
- ☄ CYCLONE-1
- ☄ CYCLONE-2
- ☄ CYCLONE-3
- ☄ CYCLONE-4
- ☄ TROPICAL DEPRESSION
- ☄ TROPICAL STORM
- ▭ Provinces
- Inundated extend (MODIS derived)